G1 be forcibly expanded to the enlarged condition, for example, using a balloon catheter, as is known in the art.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please withdraw claims 21-36 without prejudice, cancel claims 2-8 without prejudice, and amend claims 1, 9, 10, and 11 to the following:

1. (Amended) An apparatus for delivering a prosthesis into a blood vessel of a patient, comprising:

an elongate tubular member having a proximal end, a distal end, and a lumen extending between the proximal and distal ends, the distal end having a size for endoluminal insertion into a G2 blood vessel and terminating in a substantially atraumatic distal portion comprising a plurality of flexible leaflets integrally molded thereto, the leaflets being deflectable from a closed position wherein the leaflets engage one another to an open position wherein the leaflets define an opening communicating with the lumen;

a tubular prosthesis disposed within the lumen proximate the distal portion; and

an elongate bumper member having a proximal end and a distal end, the bumper member being slidably disposed within the lumen of the elongate tubular member, the distal end of the bumper member having a blunt edge disposed adjacent the proximal end of the prosthesis for

preventing axial displacement of the prosthesis upon retraction of the tubular member with respect to the bumper member;

wherein adjacent leaflets are connected to one another by weakened regions, the weakened regions being tearable upon retraction of the tubular member with respect to the prosthesis to allow the leaflets to be deflected towards the open position.

9. (Amended) An apparatus for delivering a prosthesis into a blood vessel of a patient, comprising:

an elongate tubular member having a proximal end, a distal end, and a lumen extending between the proximal and distal ends, the distal end having a size for endoluminal insertion into a blood vessel and terminating in a substantially atraumatic distal portion comprising a plurality of flexible leaflets integrally molded thereto, the leaflets being deflectable from a closed position wherein the leaflets engage one another to an open position wherein the leaflets define an opening communicating with the lumen;

a tubular prosthesis disposed within the lumen proximate the distal portion; and

an elongate bumper member having a proximal end and a distal end, the bumper member being slidably disposed within the lumen of the elongate tubular member, the distal end of the bumper member having a blunt edge disposed adjacent the proximal end of the prosthesis for preventing axial displacement of the prosthesis upon retraction of the tubular member with respect to the bumper member;

wherein the leaflets include a portion having a thickness that is substantially thinner than a wall thickness of the distal portion of the tubular member from which the leaflets extend.

10. (Amended) An apparatus for delivering a prosthesis into a blood vessel of a patient, comprising:

an elongate tubular member having a proximal end, a distal end, and a lumen extending between the proximal and distal ends, the distal end having a size for endoluminal insertion into a blood vessel and terminating in a substantially atraumatic distal portion comprising a plurality of flexible leaflets integrally molded thereto, the leaflets being deflectable from a closed position wherein the leaflets engage one another to an open position wherein the leaflets define an opening communicating with the lumen;

a tubular prosthesis disposed within the lumen proximate the distal portion; and

an elongate bumper member having a proximal end and a distal end, the bumper member being slidably disposed within the lumen of the elongate tubular member, the distal end of the bumper member having a blunt edge disposed adjacent the proximal end of the prosthesis for preventing axial displacement of the prosthesis upon retraction of the tubular member with respect to the bumper member;

wherein the bumper member comprises a helical coil.

11. (Amended) An apparatus for delivering a prosthesis into a blood vessel of a patient, comprising:

an elongate tubular member having a proximal end, a distal end, and a lumen extending between the proximal and distal ends, the distal end having a size for endoluminal insertion into a blood vessel;

a tubular prosthesis disposed within the lumen proximate the distal end; and

an elongate bumper member comprising a helical coil having a proximal end and a distal end, the bumper member being slidably disposed within the lumen of the elongate tubular member, the distal end of the bumper member having a blunt distal edge disposed adjacent the proximal end of the prosthesis for preventing axial displacement of the prosthesis upon retraction of the tubular member with respect to the bumper member.

Please add new claims 37 through 41:

37. (New) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein adjacent leaflets are connected to one another by weakened regions, the weakened regions being tearable upon retraction of the tubular member with respect to the prosthesis to allow the leaflets to be deflected toward the open position.

38. (New) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein adjacent leaflets are separated by a slit such that the leaflets are independently deflectable.

39. (New) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the leaflets include a portion having a thickness that is substantially thinner than a wall thickness of the distal portion of the tubular member from which the leaflets extend.

40. (New) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the leaflets partially overlap with one another in the closed position

41. (New) An apparatus for delivering a prosthesis into a blood vessel of a patient, comprising:

an elongate tubular member having a proximal end, a distal end, and a lumen extending between the proximal and distal ends, the distal end having a size for endoluminal insertion into a blood vessel and terminating in a substantially atraumatic distal portion comprising a plurality of flexible leaflets integrally molded thereto, the leaflets being deflectable from a closed position wherein the leaflets engage one another to an open position wherein the leaflets define an opening communicating with the lumen;

a tubular prosthesis disposed within the lumen proximate the distal portion; and

an elongate bumper member having a proximal end and a distal end, the bumper member being slidably disposed within the lumen of the elongate tubular member, the distal end of the bumper member having a blunt edge disposed adjacent the proximal end of the prosthesis for